A Guide to the Three-Step Permitting Process

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City of Fairfax
The Heart of Northern Virginia™

City of Fairfax

Guide to the Three-Step Permitting Process

Home improvements, office renovations, or installing a permanent sign for your business can be exciting. . . . and challenging.

At the City of Fairfax , we share your enthusiasm and want to help ensure that each step of the process is as safe and smooth as possible.

Our goal is to work with you to help avoid unnecessary delays and minimize inconvenience, while ensuring that the codes established for the common good of our residents, businesses, and visitors are met.

To facilitate your project's success, we have recently implemented a number of initiatives to simplify and stream-line the process of obtaining the necessary permits required within the City of Fairfax. The following pages outline the steps involved.

We hope you will find our renewed level of responsiveness and attention to your needs refreshing. If you have any questions, comments, and suggestions, please do not hesitate to call us at (703) 385-7830, or stop by the Office of Code Administration in Room 103 or the Zoning Office in Room 101 at City Hall.

Obtaining Building, Electrical, Plumbing, Mechanical, Fire Alarm, and Suppression Permits

Note: If you are hiring a contractor to do work requiring a permit, it is recommended that the contractor fill out the application and apply for the permit. That way, the contractor accepts responsibility for the project and his licensure can be verified. If the homeowner is doing the project, the homeowner can pull the permit and is not required to be licensed as a contractor.

1. To Begin

Complete your permit application and submit it to the Office of Code Administration (Room 103).

- Application forms can be obtained from the Office of Code Administration. Forms can also be downloaded from the City web site (www.ci.fairfax.va.us).
- If plans are needed for your project, you will need to submit 4 sets of drawings, including a plat showing where new construction will go on the property. Drawings must be to scale and include all proposed work.
- If plans are not needed for your project, you can fax your application to 703-385-9265.
- Depending on the project's scope, additional written specifications may also be required. If you have any questions, please call (703) 385-7830

2. Review

After we receive your application, we will forward a copy to the Zoning Office (Room 101) where compliance with zoning regulations will be verified. The Zoning Office will also review the application to determine if consideration by the City Council, Board of Zoning Appeals, or the Board of Architectural Review is required.

The application will be reviewed concurrently by the Office of Code Administration to verify compliance with the applicable building/electrical/plumbing/mechanical/fire alarm/suppression code requirements.

- Zoning regulations determine which land uses are permitted and control the physical development of sites including building and signage setbacks, height, parking, landscaping, etc.

- With the exception of single-family detached dwellings, most exterior alterations require architectural review and approval. The Board of Architectural Review meets on the first and third Wednesday of each month.
- Certain applications may also require review by the Fairfax County Health Department. If so, you must deliver your plans & application to the Health Department for review.

> Fairfax County Health Department
> 10777 Main Street, Suite 102A
> Fairfax, VA 22030
> (703) 264-2444 (Consumer Services)

- If for some reason, your application is not approved by the Zoning Office, or if approval by the Council or boards is required, the Zoning Office will contact you immediately.
- Walk-in plan review is available in the afternoon for most home improvements, and small commercial jobs. Please call the Office of Code Administration at (703) 385-7830 to set up an appointment.

3. Pick-Up and Pay

As soon as your permit is approved, the Office of Code Administration staff will contact you to pick up and pay for the necessary permits.

- When picking up your permits, come to the Office of Code Administration (Room 103).
- Fees being paid by credit card or cash must be paid to the Treasurer's Office (Room 208) between the hours of 8:30 am and 5:00 pm.
- Fees being paid by check may be paid in the Office of Code Administration between the hours of 7:00 am and 5:00 pm.
- All work is subject to field inspections and the nonresidential use permit process. Please contact the Zoning Office and the Office of Code Administration for more information on this process.

Obtaining Permits for Permanent Signs

1. To Begin

Submit the sign permit application and the building/electrical permit applications to the Office of Code Administration (Room 103). Sign permits are required for all new signs and for reface of existing signs, whether or not building/electrical permits are required.

- Building/electrical permit application forms can be obtained from the Office of Code Administration or be downloaded off the City website (www.ci.fairfax.va.us).

- Sign permit applications can be obtained from the Zoning Office (Room 101). Sign permits are required for all new signs and for reface of existing signs, whether or not building/electrical permits are required.
- Attach four sets of drawings of the sign, its electrical components, and its structural support to your application.

2. Review

After we receive your application, we will forward a copy to the Zoning Office (Room 101) where compliance with zoning regulations will be verified. The Zoning Office will also review the application to determine if consideration by the Board of Architectural Review is required.

The application will be reviewed concurrently by the Office of Code Administration to verify compliance with the applicable building/electrical code requirements.

- Zoning regulations control the type, number, size, and location of signs. Signs in the Old Town Fairfax Historic District, Transition Districts, and certain other signs must be approved by the Board of Architectural Review.
- If for some reason your application is not approved by the Zoning Office, or if review by the Board of Architectural Review is required, the Zoning staff will contact you immediately.

3. Pick-Up and Pay

As soon as your permits are approved, the Office of Code Administration staff will contact you to pick up and pay for the necessary permits.

- When picking up your permits, come to the Office of Code Administration (Room 103).
- Fees being paid by credit card or cash must be paid to the Treasurer's Office (Room 208) between the hours of 8:30 am and 5:00 pm.
- Fees being paid by check may be paid in the Office of Code Administration between the hours of 7:00 am and 5:00 pm.
- All work is subject to field inspections and the non-RUP process. Please contact the Zoning Office and the Office of Code Administration for more information on this process.

Obtaining Tree Removal Permits

Anyone proposing to remove a tree from a commercial or institutional lot or a common area belonging to a homeowners association must obtain a tree removal permit. In addition, a tree removal permit will be required for removal of trees greater than 5" in caliper from private residential lots

greater than a half acre, and for removal of trees of any size that have been proferred under a planned development, rezoning or that are located in conservation easements.

1. To Begin
Complete and submit your application to the Zoning Office.
- Please provide any information you have on the condition and location of the trees proposed to be removed.

2. Review
Your application will be reviewed by the Zoning Office to verify compliance with zoning regulations.

3. Pick-Up and Pay
When approved, you will be contacted and may pick up your permit.

CITY OF FAIRFAX
City Hall
10455 Armstrong Street
Fairfax, Virginia 22030

Zoning Office		
Board of Architectural Review	Room 101	(703) 385-7820
Office of Code Administration	Room 103	(703) 385-7830
Treasurer	Room 208	(703) 385-7904

Community Development and Planning (City of Fairfax)
http://www.ci.fairfax.va.us/Services/CommDevPlan/CDP.htm

Residential and Nonresidential Use Application (City of Fairfax)
http://www.ci.fairfax.va.us/Services/CommDevPlan/docs/CERT OF OCC99.pdf

Virginia Department of Taxation
(Main Website, Online Sales Tax Registrations)
http://www.tax.state.va.us/

Fairfax County Circuit Court Clerk
(Registration of Trade Name, Certificate of Partnerships)
http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/courts/circuit/homepage.htm

Virginia State Corporation Commission
http://www.state.va.us/scc/

Department of Professional and Occupational License Board for Contractors
http://www.state.va.us/dpor/indexne.html

Construction Related Permit Applications
http://www.ci.fairfax.va.us/Fire Rescue/Code Admin Forms.htm

Sign Permit Application (City of Fairfax)
http://www.ci.fairfax.va.us/Services/CommDevPlan/signprocedure.htm#app

Tree Removal Permit Application (City of Fairfax)
http://www.ci.fairfax.va.us/Services/CommDevPlan/docs/TREE_REMOVAL_PERMIT.pdf

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